

# Thomas-Jensen Affirmation

## Exhibit # 96

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF RHODE ISLAND**

**STATE OF NEW YORK, ET AL.**

**Plaintiffs,**

**v.**

**C.A. No. 1:25-cv-00039-JJM-PAS**

**DONALD TRUMP, in his Official  
Capacity as President of the United  
States, et al.**

**Defendants**

**Declaration of Sarah Blaney  
Executive Director  
Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts**

Blaney declares as follows:

1. I am the Executive Director of the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts (OACD). The OACD is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization focused on our mission which is: to provide leadership, resources and partnership opportunities for conservation districts and those who manage the land. OACD has represented conservation districts since 1939. Among other things, the OACD solicits grant money from other donors and government entities, including the federal government.

2. I have personal knowledge of the matters set forth below or have knowledge of the matters based on my review of information and records gathered by my staff.

3. I am providing this declaration to explain some of the adverse impacts of the

threatened and actual suspensions and impoundments of federal grant funding resulting from: (1) President Trump's Executive Orders; (2) the memorandum "Temporary Pause of Agency Grant, Loan, and Other Financial Assistance Programs," Matthew J. Vaeth, Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget (January 28, 2025) ("OMB Memo"); and (3) other federal agency actions.

4. The OACD continues to see impacts from federal funding suspensions. In 2024, the OACD was awarded a \$831,008 grant by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, award number NR243A750003C104. This grant program is funded by the federal funds .

5. The objectives of our grant are to address local natural resource issues by increasing targeted outreach to SDA and historically underserved, promote the adoption of conservation by providing both outreach and technical assistance to historically underserved producers. Through our partnership with the Oklahoma Black Historical Research Project and the Muscogee (Creek) Nation Conservation District, as well as, the Choctaw Nation Conservation District we provide a robust catalog of educational opportunities about soil and water conservation through our demonstration projects and field days. We work to encourage conservation in small scale and urban agriculture by partnering with FreshRx, a food prescription program, and the Oklahoma Food Hub to identify the needs of small-scale producers and to conduct outreach and education in the urban centers of our state. We are working to develop conservation leadership skills and opportunities by conducting a specific five session Conservation and Agriculture Reach Everyone (CARE) leadership class for all 20 of champions identified plus 5 mentor champions.

6. The OACD's grant is fully funded, and we have been accessing the funds

through the federal government's EZ Feds Grants System.

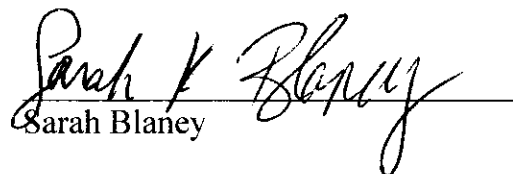
7. The OACD has been attempting to secure a reimbursement for expenses already incurred since January 9, 2025. These expenses were incurred by the organization between 10/1/2024 – 12/31/2024. The temporary freeze and confusion of agency staff and civil servants has caused serious delay of our reimbursement request of \$198,124.31. As claim number: 124788. The civil servants I am working with have tried to provide answers and assist with my financial request, but we have not received our reimbursement.

8. The continued suspension of the grant funds will hamper the OACD's efforts to fulfill its mission and the purposes of this already-awarded grant. Specifically, as of January 31, 2025, we do not have the necessary funds needed to pay six employees and 26 additional contractors that receive all or part of their salary through this already funded and obligated federal grant. This will directly impact our ability to help farmers and ranchers operate their agricultural businesses. Furthermore, these expenses have not just been incurred by the Oklahoma Association of Conservation Districts, but also 17 conservation districts that have already paid out these salaries.

9. We continue to be concerned that the funding or will continue to be delayed because of the Executive Orders.

Pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1746, I declare under penalty of perjury that the foregoing is true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Dated: 2/6/2025

  
Sarah Blaney